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ABSTRACT

This report, the third of seven, part of an interdisciplinary project on the context of reading and reading research that explores similarities and dissimilarities in the response to literature in readers from different cultures, describes the empirical selection procedure used in order to identify the three tales which were to be used in future work on the "Folktale" project. The paper presents a study in which the subjects, 115 Danish high school students (aged 16 to 18) read either three Turkish, three Danish, or four Greenlandic tales and were then asked to write their answers to five identical questions concerning their attitudes towards the stories, their feelings about the stories' content, and their understanding of the stories' meaning. The paper explains that the answers were analyzed and used to establish which tale in each group elicited the most faceted response with the readers, which would therefore be most useful for future work on the project. The paper relates that these results led to the selection of the Turkish tale "The Golden Apple," the Danish tale "Per Smed's Whip," and the Greenlandic tale "The Barking Ones." One table of data is included, and 16 references, two appendixes, and an overview of the project are attached. (MS)

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FOLKTALE:
A CROSS-CULTURAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF LITERATURE

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Title: THE EMPIRICAL SELECTION - BY MEANS OF READERS' RESPONSES - OF THE THREE TALES TO BE USED IN THE FOLKTALE PROJECT

Author(s): Cay Dollerup, Birte Kristensen, Carsten Rosenberg Hansen, Iven Reventlow, and Christopher Tinson

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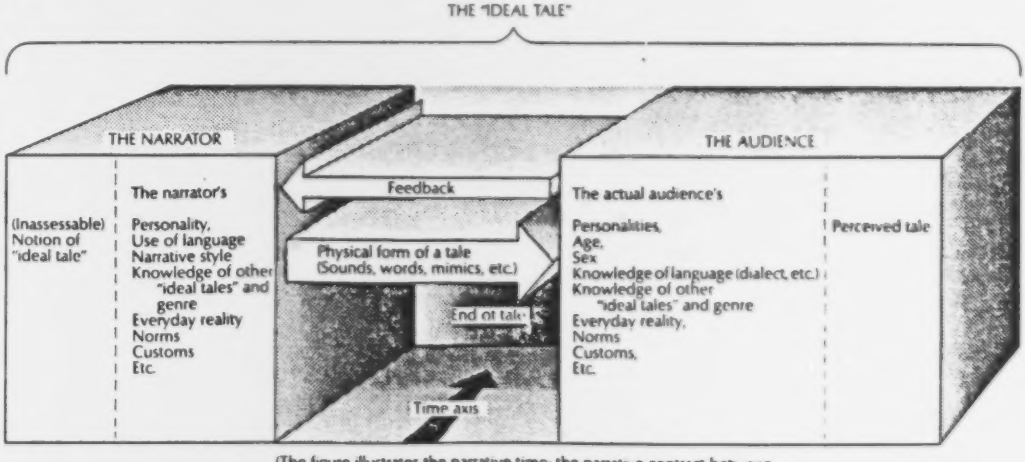

(The figure illustrates the narrative time: the narrative contract between narrator and audience and which is limited in time.)

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FOLKTALE. A CROSS-CULTURAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCE OF LITERATURE

REPORT NO. 3

The Empirical Selection - by Means of Readers' Responses - of the Three Tales to be Used in the Folktale project.

Authors: Cay Dollerup, Birte Kristensen, Iven Reventlow, Carsten Rosenberg Hansen, Christopher Tinson.

ABSTRACT:

The report describes the empirical selection procedure used in order to identify the three tales which were going to be used for the future work in the Folktale-project. Divided into three groups, a total of 115 Danish readers, aged 16 to 18, read either three Turkish, three Danish, or four Greenlandic tales.

After the reading, the participants were asked to write their answers to five identical questions concerning their attitude to the stories, their feelings about their contents and the like.

The answers were analysed and used for establishing which tale in each group elicited the most facetted response with the readers, and which would therefore be most useful for future work in the project.

The stories selected in this way were the Turkish The Golden Apple, the Danish Per Smed's Whip. Some special considerations were taken into account for selecting the Greenlandic The Barking Ones (previously: the Pleiad). (CD).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS PAGE
(The present table does not list all headings)

ABSTRACT 2
Table of Contents 3
Acknowledgements 4
Authorship 4

I.0 THE THINKING BEHIND THE EMPIRICAL SELECTION 5
I.1 The Readers in the Selection Study 6
I.2 Procedure 7
I.2.1 Preparation and Pre-reading instruction in Class .. 8
I.2.2 The Questions and Data-collection in Class 9
I.2.3 The Classes Participating 11
I.3 Reservations 13

II.0 THE ANALYSES 14

III.0 THE DOCUMENTATION: THE RESPONSES TO THE STORIES ... 15

III.1 THE TURKISH STORIES 15
III.1 The Readers 15
III.1.2 Discussions of the Tales among the Readers 16
III.1.3 The Readers' Preferences 17
III.1.4 Familiar or Alien Character of the Stories 21
III.1.5 The Symbolic Elements in the Stories 24
III.1.6 The "Deeper Meaning" in the Stories 26

III.2 THE DANISH STORIES (Subheadings as at III.1) 29

III.3 THE GREENLANDIC TALES (Subheadings as at III.1) ... 39

IV DISCUSSION OF THE RESPONSES (With discussions of various aspects and limitations) 50

V SELECTION OF THE TALES FOR FUTURE WORK 54
V.1 The Turkish Stories 54
V.2 The Danish Tales 55
V.3 The Greenlandic Tales 56
V.3.1 Discussion 57
V.3.2 The Greenlandic Tales: Postscript 58
V.4 Concluding Remarks 60
VI.0 Works Cited 60

VII APPENDICES 62

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The study has been carried through this stage thanks to financial support from The Department of English, University of Copenhagen, and the UNESCO.

AUTHORSHIP

The analyses of the written responses of the Turkish and Greenlandic tales have been undertaken by Birte Kristensen according to the model used in the analysis of the Danish tales (see Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985 a). These analyses of the Turkish and Greenlandic tales have been checked by Chris Tinson, who has also corrected the whole report linguistically.

As mentioned in the first report of the Folktale-project, we do not claim that we are dealing with "true" folktales in this study, but only that we use approximations of "ideal folktales" as literature.

In the present context, we are not even concerned with the "filters" which recorders, translators, and we have inserted between the tales printed (and which our readers meet with in the study) and the original, oral, "ideal" tale which existed in a unique narrative event embracing narrator and audience.

We are concerned exclusively with the experimental selection of one of three or four stories from each of the three cultures represented in our study. In the first parts of the report we detail the rationale behind this part of the project and we describe the procedure employed. The main bulk of the report is an in-depth presentation of the readers' responses to the tales; and in turn, this makes up the documentation for the final selection of three tales - one from each culture - which will be used for future work.

I.O THE THINKING BEHIND THE EMPIRICAL SELECTION OF TALES BY MEANS OF READERS' RESPONSES.

In the previous report, Report 2, we described how we identified eleven tales, namely three Turkish, three Danish ones and five Greenlandic ones as potentially useful for future work in the Folktale-project.

The tales answered the requirements that they were (a) from different cultures, (b) as authentic as possible, (c) preferably told by competent narrators, (d) less than c. 3,000 words in length, and (e) potentially capable of eliciting facetted responses (Report 2: 6); as far as the Greenlandic tales, we also decided that only four tales should be tested in the present stage

As mentioned in Report 1: 7-8, our primary basis is what readers report. Accordingly, it would be somewhat illogical of us, a prioristically to determine precisely what texts are the best ones for the study - and thus it is logical that we use empirical evidence (i.e. readers' responses) for narrowing the field from three or five tales to the one tale from each culture which we shall use for our future work.

Futhermore, there would be no aprioristic guarantee that we could pick the tales which elicit the most facetted responses, as we are circumscribed in a number of ways: our work with the texts means that our experiences of them and attitudes to them are a far remove from the immediate experience which is central to our data-collecting. We also have background knowledge which will influence our selections (and probably has done so). And, belonging as we do, to specific age and social groups, we probably have norms that are not necessarily identical with those of most readers in the main study.

In addition, we also know that no one reader will be capable of expressing all legitimate aspects of the experience of a text, and this logically leads us to choose a group of readers for providing us with their responses on the tales, the way we have done previously (Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen 1985 b).

I.1 The Readers in the Selection Study

Of course, it would have been preferable to have readers from all conceivable cultures in the world participate in the selection round we are dealing with here, but it is readily appreciated that, although hypothetically desirable, it is impossible in practice.

The participants were therefore students from "2.g.", i.e. the penultimate class in the Danish "gymnasium", (11th or 12th year in school, corresponding roughly to senior high school/A-level/Hochschule/lycée). Their age is 17 to 19 years.

The most obvious reason for referring to these readers is that our good relations with teachers at the "gymnasia" makes it easy to have access to classes. We ensure the students' cooperation by promising them in advance that after they have participated they will be told about the project and their role in it.

Apart from availability, there are a few more reasons why we prefer these readers:

In the first place, "gymnasiaster" will make up our anchor-group in the main experiment (Report 1:21). And it would not be wise to include a tale which is useless with them in the project.

Secondly, our previous investigations have shown that their responses are fairly comprehensive - as a group (Dollerup, 1970; Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985b): although some readers contribute only little, others contribute much. The latter is no surprise, for compared to at least some other school systems the Danish one emphasises the development of the students' own views, and accordingly students are often fairly articulate at the higher levels such as the two last years of the three-year "gymnasium".

Thirdly, the present-day "gymnasium" attracts 30 to 40 per cent of all young people; so recruitment is not limited to a small elite. This does not mean that the students constitute a statistically representative cross-section of Danish society, but only that they represent virtually all levels of society.

All told, we would be hard put to find a similarly comprehensive group with fairly few individuals, and with our limited means.

I.2 Procedure

We wanted to get brief responses which were manageable and yet sufficient in number for us to be sure that we had a fair degree of representativity in terms of breadth of aspects in the responses.*

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* The word "response" is what is gaugeable, e.g. linguistically as a 'statement', in the reader's experience, whose totality we do not claim to cover with individual readers.

Our previous experiences have shown that c. 25 readers suffice for this purpose (e.g. Dollerup, 1971; Dollerup, Glahn, Rosenberg Hansen, 1982). However, as Danish classes do not always have that many students, we always take the precaution to contact two classes (and we do not then pick a select few from one of them to make up our total, but include everybody).

115 readers from six classes at four Danish schools participated.

I.2.1 Preparation and Pre-reading Instruction

In spring and early summer 1984, we contacted teachers and classes to make sure that they were willing to take part in the project.

On a day appointed, the texts from one cultural group were handed out in one class at one of the schools.

The students were asked to read the stories at home, for a lesson sometime later, e.g. a week (the instruction is given in appendix 1). The instruction was read out either by Cay Dollerup (CD), Birte Kristensen (BK), or the regular teacher. It briefly stated that

- the students were asked to read three or four tales carefully, and that
- Cay Dollerup or Birte Kristensen would turn up for a specified lesson and ask some questions which were to be answered in writing in class.

It was emphasised that it was not a test and that the main emphasis lay on the students' own views, so they were enjoined to read the tales carefully before making up their minds. Similarly they were told that the answers were anonymous and that they would be told about the purpose of the study in the last few minutes in the 45-minute lesson.

The reason why the readers were asked to take the texts home and read them, instead of having to read them in class, connected with the problem that they had to make up their minds about several tales. This meant that even the slowest

readers would get through all the tales.

The drawback was that the students might discuss the tales and reach a concensus which would bias their answers. Notably Gunnar Hansson (1959) has found that unstructured discussions of the type we were likely to meet with at this stage, rarely affect other the students' responses greatly. But to be on the safe side, we asked whether the students had discussed the tales or not before answering the questions in class.

In order to make sure that there were no discussions in between classes of the tales, only one class at each school got the tales from the same Danish/Turkish/Greenlandic group.

It should be noted, that the pre-reading instruction cited above is non-directive and does not indicate what we would ask about.

I.2.2 The Questions and Data-collection in Class

About seven to ten days later either Cay Dollerup (CD) or Birte Kristensen(BK) would turn up in class and take over.

The instruction given as appendix B below was handed out to all students, together with five questions and five blank pages for answering. In the case of the Greenlandic and the Turkish tales, the students were asked to indicate their sex on the papers.

THE FIRST QUESTION WAS:
"Which of the three/four stories was best?
Why?"

This question about the readers' preference had been used in the "Tension" study in 1968-69. The results had shown e.g. that we cannot automatically assume that there is a one-to-one correspondence between fullness of response and preference, nor between preference and the wish to re-read tale (Dollerup, 1975). In the present context the question was used to

make sure that we did not accidentally end up with a story which was essentially disliked by the readers.

THE SECOND QUESTION RAN:

"Which story do you consider most Danish or alien?
In what way?"

This question had been made for the "Fairytale-study" (Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985a). In the present context it was meant to establish to what extent we could argue that a tale was a carrier of cultural norms, etc.

THE THIRD QUESTION WAS:

"Are these stories or elements in them symbolic?
If so - in what way?"

This question was also taken over from the "Fairytale-study" although it was not readily understood by all readers (see Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg, 1985b).

THE FOURTH QUESTION

'Does one or more of them have any "deeper meaning' (don't waste any time explaining how you define this concept).
If so - which ones?"

derived from the "Meaning-study" (Bostrup, Brask, Rosenberg Hansen 1979). It turned out to generate good thematic suggestions - at least with Danish readers.

THE FIFTH QUESTION:

"Have you talked with anybody else about the stories?
If so, I would like to know if you have changed your mind on any points and what they were."

was developed for the "Fairytale-study" for use in Denmark (Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen 1985a) in order to

check on the possible influence of such discussions.

When the instruction and the questions had been handed out, the students could start writing their answers. If any participant raised a question in class, the answer was given aloud in order to stress the informality.

At the beginning of class, the students were also told that they would have 35-40 minutes at their disposal (depending on how long after the start of the lesson the actual handing-out of the question could start), and they were advised a few minutes before the end, so that we would have 5-10 minutes in which to describe the project and the importance of their participation.

The answers were collected discretely, those from students who had been sitting beside one another being placed together in order that the material could easily be checked for cribbing.

I.2.3 The Classes Participating

On the following page is a table which gives an overview of the classes and readers participating.

READERS' PARTICIPATION IN STAGE 2 OF THE FOLKTALE PROJECT

TIME	CLASS AND SCHOOL	2z Rødovre	2a Vallensbæk	2b Skt Jørgen	2v Rysensteen	2z Vallensbæk	2c Rødovre
	Active participants	22readers	17 readers	19 readers	16 readers	20 readers	21 readers
One week before the actual data-collection in class	Prereading instruction read out by:	CD	teacher	CD	teacher	CD	teacher
	Nationality of the tales handed out:	TURKISH	TURKISH	DANISH	DANISH	GREENLANDIC	GREENLANDIC
The actual 45-minute lesson used for data-collection	Date	10 May 1984	8 May 1984	17 March 1980	28 March 1980	8 May 1984	3 May 1984
	In charge of collection:	BK	CD	BK	CD	BK	BK
	The readers were given the instruction and five questions	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	The readers were asked to indicate their own gender	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES

I.3 Reservations

It must be stressed that the study at this stage is not based on statistical analyses of the material collected. It is true that in some few cases where there is almost total agreement among the readers, we may take this into account. Yet we do not claim that this is anything more than an indication of the potential views and therefore not necessarily the indisputably best option.

It must also be mentioned that we do not expect all potential and legitimate aspects of the experience of a specific story to surface at this stage. We know this is unlikely to happen (Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985b).

And it must be emphasised that the responses we get at this stage can be used for one thing only in the framework of the Folktale-project, namely, to identify tales which are clearly useless, and to give some pointers as to which ones may be useful and among which we should pick the tales for the future work. The responses may be completely legitimate; but as hinted in the "Concluding Remarks" in Report 2 we do not at this stage think the three or five tales in each group have been translated perfectly - only in the same way. This is why a comparison between the responses of readers is methodologically sound, although the tales may be "distorted".

In addition to the fact that we do not necessarily identify the tale "universally and unquestionably best" in all cultures, there is furthermore a danger of ethnocentricity, in so far as we are at this stage dealing with the responses of readers from only one culture.

And as a last caution, we must point out that we are not dealing with "pure" responses, i.e. responses on only one tale. As we have asked our readers to respond to three or four tales, they will unavoidably compare them, and perhaps even mix them up; and there is no doubt that the response to one tale affects those on the others.

II. THE ANALYSIS

The answers were subjected to a highly modified form of content analysis, ultimately based on Purves and Rippere's categories (Purves and Rippere, 1958), and mostly broken down into "statements", i.e. the smallest units carrying a single meaning (a definition inspired by Wilson, 8,fn.). But there are exceptions as we prefer to have clarity prevail over strictness of breakdown, and direct quotations are given in quotation marks.

The first analyses of this type were undertaken in the "Tension" study, (Cay Dollerup,1969 (in Danish)). The procedure was used in the "Fairytale-study", with a somewhat different emphasis (Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985b) and, as mentioned Folktale-Report 2: 13-14, we here use our then analyses of the responses to the Danish tales, which been set up in a way which was scholarly sound. The analyses of the Turkish and Greenlandic tales were made by Birte Kristensen in 84/II and 85/I, and her work was checked by Chris Tinson (85/I).

In our breakdowns, we have been obliged to introduce the concept of 'legitimate statements', i.e. we accept only statements which cannot be disproved on the basis of the text. 'Illegitimate' statements - which can be proved wrong from the text or context - are marked with an asterisk (*).

Furthermore we have imposed some uniformity on the handling of the statements to make it easier to compare them. Thus "realstic" and its synonyms are listed under Formal Features, and a happy ending is similarly always bracketed as part of the plot.

The following pages, then, contain the documentation leading up to the choice of texts given at the end of the present report.

III. THE DOCUMENTATION: THE RESPONSES TO THE STORIES.

III.1 THE TURKISH STORIES

In Report 2: 9 we have described how the Turkish tales, namely,
Keloglan,
The Golden Apple (henceforth Apple), and
The Small Cooking Pot (henceforth Pot) were selected and translated into Danish.
Summaries of the tales are given in Report 2: 10-12.

III.1.1 The Readers

2z, Rødovre Statsskole (teacher: Mads Thranholm) were from the science branch. The twenty-two readers are numbered 1-22. There were nine girls and twelve boys - and one who forgot to state his/her sex (participant 17X). The texts were handed out with the instruction on 26 April by CD, and the answers were collected on 10 May 1984 by BK. After the answers had been collected and the students were told about the aims of the study there was a relaxed chat, where some mentioned that they would have preferred to spend more time answering the questions which they thought might well have been handed out together with the texts. (BK had a feeling that one reader may have been in possession of the questions [because of a misunderstanding the collection of their answers had been postponed one week, whereas the collection of the answers on the Greenlandic tale at the same school took place on 3 May 85 as originally planned]. If so we have been unable to track down any influence from such prior knowledge - and not even to identify the student in question).

Some readers did not answer all questions: one reader did not answer question 2 (2M). Six readers failed to answer question 3 (2M, 5F,6M, 10F, 12M, 13M); question 4 (1M, 2M, 9F, 16M, 18M, 20F); and question 5 (readers 1M, 2M, 9F, 11M, 18M, 21F).

The other class 2a from Vallensbæk Statsskole was from the modern language branch. The seven readers - all girls - were numbered 23-39F (Female). The tales were handed out in class by the teacher, Lene Nordmann, one week in advance with an oral reading out of the prereading instruction (appendix A), and the answers were collected on 8 May 1984 by CD and BK.

Three readers did not answer question 3 (26F, 27F, and 33F). Two readers lumped the answer to questions 3 and 4 together (31F and 34F). Two readers failed to answer question 4 (35F and 36F); and question 5 (29F and 35F).

III.1.2 DISCUSSIONS OF THE TALES AMONG THE STUDENTS (QUESTION 5)

As mentioned the last question concerned the students' discussions of the tales with others.

In the science class - with 22 readers - six readers had not answered the question (1M, 2M, 9F, 11M, 12M, 18M). Twelve readers had not discussed the fairytales with others (3M, 4M, 5F, 6F, 7F, 12M, 13M, 14M, 16M, 17X, 19F, 22M). Four readers wrote that they had talked with others about the tales and that they had not changed their views (8F, 10F, 15M, 20F) - thus 10F had merely asked "if anybody knew what a Keloglan was" and only reader 8F reported on the contents of the discussion:

> "Yes, many looked askance on the stories because their style was so odd (cigarettes, coffeehouse,..: Then there was the mixture of the past and present tense)."

As none of these four readers reported that the discussions had caused them to change their mind on any points, whatever discussion had taken place seems to have had little effect. In the modern language class - with seventeen readers - two participants (29F and 35F) did not answer the question. Six readers claimed they had not discussed the tales (23F, 26F, 27F, 38F, 32F, 36F) and 28F added "No I have not discussed the stories with others - yet." Nine readers had discussed the tales with others (24F, 25F, 30F, 31F, 33F, 34F, 37F, 38F, 39F) and six added that they had not changed their minds - "Yes, I discussed the stories with a couple of classmates but I did not change my mind because of that" (24F) is characteristic; three of these readers reported that they had talked only cursorily about the tales (30F, 31F, 37F). Some few words crop up with several readers and may be due to some of these discussions: at different questions 31F, 37F and 39F all answer the tales are "sjove" (i.e. funny), and 31F and 34F use the word "underlige" (strange). One reader refers to a brief discussion where many students may have been present: "The only thing we sort of discussed in class was the passage where Keloglan arrived at the giantess'. We laughed quite a lot." (38F)

By and large, it seems as if the discussions did not change much, if anything, and this is hardly surprising as they appear to have centred on one or two funny episodes and the alien character of the tales. However, 34F stated that the texts had been discussed much: "We have talked a lot about the texts; about how strange they were, but when you think them over there is nevertheless more to them," thus also being the only reader who felt that she changed her mind about them, although this was the outcome of her own thinking - not the discussions.

III.1.3 THE READERS' PREFERENCES (QUESTION 1)

The first question in the instruction to the readers was:
"Which of the three stories was best?
Why?"

Five readers gave no preference because they considered all tales bad: 3M merely stated they were all bad. 24F objected to the repetitions and incoherence of the improbable tales. 1M found them dull and without humour and coherence. 9F objected to the modernized elements. And 28F objected to stylistic "errors" (changing tenses, commas), odd (onomatopoetic) words and considered the tales grotesque, vulgar and a strange mixture of fairytales and sensationalism. 8F wavered between Apple or Pot and consequently commented on both. 4M stressed that all three tales were bad (banal, wishfullfilment and unrealistic) so that his preference for Apple was based on its being the most entertaining. 37F felt that they were all equally good/bad.

The remaining thirty-one readers had little or no difficulty in identifying the tale they liked best. Of these thirty-one, seven compared all three tales (7F, 10F, 13M, 18M, 22M, 34F, 36F). Four of them compared the preferred tale with the two others in generalised terms (13M, 18M, 34F, 36F) - e.g. "Apple was best, because it was not as odd as the other stories. More like a fairytale. At the same time it was different because "the hero" was a girl and not, as usual, a boy!" (34F). The remaning three readers in this group commented specifically on all tales (7F, 10F, 22M), e.g. "Apple was best. Because you can paticipate in a development and it is written in a way that makes you identify more with it than with Pot, which is very short, and with Keloglan, which I did not fully understand, e.g. the very title. Also, it is arranged in an exciting way with dramatic high-points." (22F).
20F compared Apple and Keloglan.

The remaining twenty-three readers mentioned only the specific story they preferred. Eighteen commented on Apple only (5F, 6F, 11M, 12M, 14M, 15M, 16M, 19F, 21F, 25F, 26F, 27F, 29F, 30F, 31F, 32F, 33F, 39F), three on Pot (2M, 23F, 35F), and two on Keloglan (17X, 38F). Two readers thought that all the tales were good, but that Apple was best (10F, 11M), and discussed them at length in their entirely individual answers.

III.1.3.1 Popularity

In absolute figures Keloglan was favoured by three readers (17X, 18M, 38F). Apple was favoured by 26 readers (4M, 5F, 6F, 7F, 8F, 10F, 11F, 12M, 13M, 14M, 15M, 16M, 19F, 20F, 21F, 22M, 25F, 26F, 27F, 29F, 30F, 31F, 32F, 33F, 34F, 39F, - including 4M who felt only that it was the most amusing story, and 8F who was unable to make a choice between Apple and Pot).

Pot was favoured by five readers (2M, 8F, 23F, 35F, 36F; - 2M and 8F had some reservations "in a way the best one" (2M), whereas 8F was undecided as to whether she preferred Apple or Pot (see above). 35F said she did not know why she favoured the story, but thought it was it reminded her of everyday life).

III.1.3.2 The Arguments for the Readers' Preferences:

In the following we list the readers arguments - both pros and cons - for their preferences tale by tale.

III.1.3.1.2 Keloglan: Arguments in Connection with Keloglan

Formal features

- best symbolism and hence best continuity: 17X
Negative: too short: 2 readers (6F, 7F - with widely different wordings).

Style

- it was the craziest of the tales. "I like to read things that are a little crazy" (38F)
Negative: onomatopoetic words and rendering of song (7F)

Themes

- the dominating role of the male, associations to women's lib.; and with possible parallels to Ulysses & Cyclop, David & Goliath (17X)

Miscellaneous

- seems to be well thought-out: 17X.
Negative: difficult to comprehend: 2 readers (10F, 22M)

III.1.3.1.3 Apple: Arguments in Connection with Apple

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it was exciting: 4 readers (11M, 19F, 20F, 22M)
- it was amusing: 3 readers (4M, 12M, 29F)
- it was funny: 2 readers (8F, 33F)
- it was not traditional: 1 reader (8F)

Formal Features

- it had the right length: 5 readers (6F, 7F, 11M, 13M, 21F), four of them adding that the other tales were too short (6F, 7F, 13M, 21F)
- there was no repetition: 13M
- it was clear: 33F

Negative: it lacked coherence: 1M

Genre Features

- it was a traditional (genuine) fairytale: 6 readers (11M, 25F, 30F, 33F, 34F, 39F)
- it contained the traditional fairytale tasks: 13M

Style

- it is written in a realistic fashion or in a way that makes you identify with it: 4 readers (11M, 21F, 22M, 39F)
- well narrated: 2 readers (21F, 32F)
- has a good symbolism and continuity: 18M
- it is imaginative, has humour and a moral: 32F

Negative: the sentences are short and like a telegramme

Elements

- the girl does not get things without acting herself, as in Pot. She uses her wits: 16M
- it is necessary to work in order to obtain the result desired: 20F
- a modern feature like the girl's smoking serves to make the tale less stilted:33F

Negative: odd modern features such as cigarettes, and a happy ending where you get a draper's shop (12M; the comment is about "things I never met with in a fairytale before").

Themes

- the role of the sexes - often expressed as pleasure with meeting a story where the girl is a hero: 13 readers (5F, 6F, 8F, 12M, 14M, 15M, 16M, 19F, 27F, 30F, 31F, 32F, 34F). Two of them added that it reflects old societal norms (14M, 15M)
- the prince's growing maturity (4M)
- the fact that one is often needlessly upset because of a comment from others, which is actually a sign of envy (5F)
- classical motif: the wise man fools the less wise (14F)

Miscellaneous

- there is much action: 6 readers (13M,19F, 20F, 22M, 26F, 32F)

Negative: it is improbable: 26F - who favours it, anyway.

III.1.3.1.4 Pot: Arguments in connection with Pot

Formal features
Negative: it was too short; 3 readers (6F, 7F, 22M)

Style

- uncomplicated: 3 readers (2M, 8F, 10F)
- short, concise, uncomplicated yet well thought out: 8F
- most "realistic" tale: 36F

Plot/action

Negative: weak: 10F

Themes

- it deals with how we discard and throw out useful things: 36F
- when the pot brought food and jewellery, they threw it away; only in the end, when it brought marriage, did they keep it: 2M

Miscellaneous

- worthwhile contentwise: 23F
- one way or another it says something essential about our societal system: 35F

III.1.3.1.5 General Comments on All Three Tales

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- they were funny: 2 readers (31F, 37F - both at question 5)

Style

Negative: no humour: 1M; - no coherence: 1M, 24F; - modern elements: 9F, 8F (by question 5); onomatopoetic words: 24F, 31F, 34F (at question 5); - grotesque, vulgar, stylistic errors (in terms of tense, commas,onomatopoetic words, telegraphic style: 28F; - mixture of present & past tense: 8F (at question 5); - superficial, perverted, messy and foolish: 29F (at question 5).

Formal features

Negative: repetition: 24F

Themes

Negative: trivial, with happy endings for all concerned and unrealistic (4M); - happy endings (28F).

Miscellaneous

Negative: boring: 1M; - too improbable: 24F; - confusing:25F; - alien/ strange (8F, 30F, 31F(-5), 34F(-5))

III.1.4 FAMILIAR OR ALIEN CHARACTER OF THE STORIES (QUESTION 2)

The second question put to the readers was:
"Which story do you consider most Danish or alien?
In what way?"

Two of the thirty-nine readers refrained from making any distinction: "None of the tales seems particularly Danish or particularly alien. Most of fairytales told in this country are either Danish (H.C. Andersen) or German (the Brothers Grimm), and none of these fairytales differ substantially from them" (12M); the other reader (18M) considered the question meaningless as the genre is not limited to certain nations.

17X felt that all the tales were rather exotic (but nevertheless chose Keloglan as the one which was closest to Danish fairytales).

Three readers compared the tales as to which was most Danish/less Danish/least Danish. Their answers ran as follows (listing the "most Danish" tale first):

Pot, Keloglan, Apple: 6F
Pot, Apple, Keloglan: 7F, 26F

"Most Danish"

Including the three readers who compared the tales and 17X, the readers considered the tales most Danish as follows:

Pot: 19 readers (3M, 4M, 6F, 7F, 13M, 14M, 15M, 19F, 21F, 22M, 23F, 28F, 29F, 31F, 32F, 34F, 35F, 36F, 38F)

Keloglan: 8 readers (5F, 8F, 9F, 10F, 11M, 16M, 17X, 37F)

Apple: 2 readers (20F, 33F)

"Least Danish/Most Alien/Exotic"

Including the three readers who compared the tales, we get the following list:

Keloglan: 13 readers (7F, 19F, 20F, 22M, 23F, 24F, 25F, 26F, 27F, 31F, 33F, 34F, 38F)

Apple: 10 readers (1M, 5F, 6F, 9F, 10F, 16M, 21F, 29F, 32F, 37F)

Pot: 2 readers (30F, 39F)

Arguments about the Character of the tales

The arguments sometimes run counter to the choice actually made - but this only illustrates that we are dealing with gradations. A breakdown runs as follows:

III.1.4.1 KELOGLAN: Arguments about Its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

Elements:

- repetitive sounds associate to old Danish ballads: 8F
- the animals are well-known in Denmark: 9F, 30F
- the giantess [the Danish translation was a "jættekvinde". "Jætter" were a race of giants in Nordic mythology]: (10F, 11M, 16M, 28F, 30F) - 11M and 16M refer to Nordic mythology.
- *coffee-house is a Danish expression: 37F*

Themes:

- a man must first be sowing his wild oats before finding himself a woman according to custom in the ancient times: 5F

Miscellaneous:

- "some of the old-fashioned code of honour about heroism, women and real men..., bloodthirsty and colourful at the same time. Full of the heavy scent of the ancient ballads": 8F
- the way they talk: 37F.

Alien/exotic ("non-Danish").

Elements:

- the name Keloglan (10F, 19F, 20F, 22M, 26F, 27F, 28F); - 10F says "I do not know what a Keloglan is".
- the vine-leaf rolls are unusual in Denmark: 30F
- the scenery, as there are no mountains and valleys in Denmark: 16F, 19F, 22M, 30F
- the giantess: 19F,31F
- the coffee-house: 4M, 15M
- the barbarity/brutality: 7F, 20F

Miscellaneous:

- narrative style and the story itself: 34F
- reminiscent of Nordic sagas/fables: 35F
- Nordic (not Danish): 36F (- who is supported by others speaking of Scandinavia) cf. above: 'Danish/Elements'
- somewhat incomprehensible to ordinary readers, e.g.: " what the giantess' scarf says and what it means to became man to the woman for men": 33F
- "because I do not understand it entirely": 22M

III.1.4.2 APPLE: Arguments about its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

Miscellaneous:

- associations to H.C. Andersen: 20F

Alien/exotic/"non-Danish"

Elements:

coffee-house: 1M, 4M, 15M, 16M
foreign names (not specified): 9F, 10F, 16M, 29F, 32F
Beyoglu: 1M, 5F, 26F, 37F
Ali Sagdik: 1M, 5F, 21F, 28F, 37F
river ("We don't have any in this country"): 5M
* pearls: 10F *
turtle doves: 10F
golden apple: 21F
kettledrum: 26F
cigarette smoking (seems ridiculous): 24F
street of cutlers: 37F
* the big castle: 1M *

Themes:

The girl is the most courageous and is the "hero": 7F
The father is ashamed of having six daughters - a feature from other cultures: 35F

Language:

harsh and grotesque: 24F, 25F

Miscellaneous:

"The country the girl is going to, the castle, the prince, the golden apple - do not seem Danish": 37F
Apple takes place in a country called Beyoglus, and as far as I know. there is nothing which bears the slightest resemblance to that country in Denmark": 6F

III.1.4.3 POT: Arguments about its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

Elements:

- no foreign names: 3M
- the setting is like Denmark c. 100-200 years ago: 13M
- it shows old-time conditions with a poor woman who spins: 28F

Themes:

The poor girl marries the prince: 7F

Narrative style:

The characters are described in a way which would fit with an ordinary Dane: 36F

Miscellaneous:

- widely different associations to H.C. Andersen: (13M, 14M, 15M, 28F, 31F), and to the pot in The Swine herd: 32F
- associations to (typical) Danish fairytales: 34F, 38F
- deals with familiar things, very similar to the fairytales we know: 29F
- associations to the Grimms' fairytales: 12M, 19F
- confusion about time of setting because of modern elements (e.g. (electric?) doorbell), means that it is hard to believe it is entirely Danish: 13F

Alien/exotic/"non-Danish"

Elements:

- vine leaves: 21F, 28F, 30F
- empress: 28F, 30F
- bath-house: 28F

Miscellaneous:

- odd and exotic compared to the other tales: 39F

III.1.5 THE SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 3)

The third question to the readers ran:
"Are the tales or elements in them symbolic?
If so - in what way?"

Nine of the thirty-nine readers did not answer the question (2M, 5F, 6F, 10F, 12M, 13M, 26F, 27F, 33F); and 26F and 27F even put a question mark to show that they did not understand the question.

Three readers answered that the tales were not symbolic (32F, 37F, 39F), and 39F added that "one cannot take anything in a fairytale seriously. It is merely entertainment and fiction."

Four readers felt that it would require a thorough analysis to answer the question (23F, 24F, 25F, 28F); and - wording it differently - 24F and 25F said they saw nothing symbolic about the stories at first glance. 1M answered that if they were symbolic it was difficult to pinpoint.

38F had "not taken that aspect into consideration".

32F complained that more time should have been allowed if readers were to be so thorough with the texts.

Two readers (31F, 34F) who chose to answer question 3 and 4 as one question, are listed in the present section (on question 3).

Ten readers stated that all 3 fairytales were symbolic (8F, 9F, 14F, 17X, 19F, 20F, 21F, 22M, 35F, 36F). 8F, 21F and 36F added some general commentary; 9F and 14M commented on Apple; 19F, 20F and 22M mentioned the weddings that last 40 days; and 20F the phrase "once upon a time".

III.1.5.1 KELOGLAN and Symbolic Elements

Four readers referred to symbols (4M, 18M, 31F, 34F); only 18M listed Keloglan as the story she liked best.
- he had not got further than the length of a barley-corn [i.e. a quotation from the tekerleme, cf. Report 2: 9] is not a question of physical distances, but it is the length of the journey towards manhood: 4M
- "the string from Keloglan to the giantess = is an umbilical cord = is a mother fixation": 18M
- the tale is about how Keloglan grows up and gains experience: 31F, 34F.

III.1.5.2 APPLE and Symbolic Elements

Six readers referred to it (3M, 4M, 9F, 14M, 15M, 18M), and three of them, 4M, 14M and 15M had listed the story as the one they liked best.
- the apple: 4 readers. 3F only mentioned it; 9F thought the apple stands for "something (almost) unattainable", while 14M and 15M stated that it is "relevant to society".
- the parting of the water; water is a symbol of woman, and may thus refer to her double life: 4F.
- the theft of the apple is a deprivation of sexuality: 18F.

III.1.5.3 POT and Symbolic Elements

Two readers referred to this tale: 2F, 30F. Neither had considered the tale best.
- there is something symbolic in their throwing the pot out until it brings the prince: 7F.
- the pot might equally well be a dog which always returns to its rightful owner: 30F.

III.1.5.4 GENERAL COMMENTS

Eight readers made generalised comments on the tales:
- virtually everybody starts out poor and ends up rich and happy, as their dreams are fulfilled - and the weak win over the strong ones: 34F
- courage and cunning lead to "happiness" one way or the other: 8F.

The rest of these readers made vague comments to the effect that there were symbols in the stories, - because there must be symbols in fairytales, such as repetition, tasks fulfilled, a certain moral (21M); - because the texts were full of crazy aberrations (29F); - that the symbols were Freudian (11M); - that the texts would be rubbish if there were no symbols (28F); - that it depended on the reader's level of abstraction (16M); - or that everything about the characters was symbolic (36F).

III.1.6 THE "DEEPER MEANING" IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 4)

The fourth question concerned the readers' experience of a "deeper meaning" in any of the stories.

Eight readers of the thirty-nine failed to answer it (1M, 9F, 16M, 18M, 20F, 35F, 36F).

As mentioned (p. 16, above), two readers answered questions 3 and 4 at the same point, and their statements are listed under question 3 (31F, 34F).

Two readers thought the tales had no deeper meaning (30F, 39F); 30F added that it might be possible to find a deeper meaning if you studied the tales closely. Similarly 28F felt that an answer required a thorough analysis.

Two readers answered that it is difficult to find a deeper meaning, but referred to one of the tales anyway (3M to Keloglan: and 14M to Apple).

Five readers answered that the tales have (probably/certainly) a deeper meaning, but did not specify what it was (7F, 17X, 25F, 29F, 38F).

7F added that it would require more knowledge of folk legends ("folkesagn") to identify their deeper meaning. One answer was illegible: 11M.

The answers are generally characterised by falling into two categories:
either the deeper meaning "shows" something;
or there is a lesson to be learned from it ("one ought to [do something specific]").

III.1.6.1 KELOGLAN and Its Deeper Meaning.

Six readers mentioned the tale, but two of them went no further (19F, 23F).

It shows

- the awakening of sexual awareness through captivity: 4M

Lessons/Moral

- you have to accomplish something to become famous: 3M
- young people should have more sexual education in order to develop a more relaxed attitude to sex: 4M
- egotism: "none of the animals will hide Keloglan when he is in trouble, because "they won't get involved"": 12M
- heroic deeds require caution: 37F

III.1.6.2 APPLE and Its Deeper Meaning.

Thirteen readers refferred to this tale, three of them without making any further comments (8F, 15M, 19F).

It shows

- an awareness of woman's role, if it is modern: 27F
- that gradually it has become accepted for women to do things which were formerly done only by men: 6F
- the relations between the sexes: 14M

Lessons/Moral

- you should not take everything that people tell you seriously: 5F
- women are not inferior to men/ just as good as men/ better than men: six readers (5F, 6F, 14M, 21F, 26F, 32F)
- the fair sex proves its strength: 13F
- "it pays to be good to your parents and do something for them": 10F
- one should honour one's parents: 32F
- the wise man fools the less wise: 14M
- don't judge a dog by its hair: 32F
- he who laughs last, laughs longest: 37F
- if you mock others, things will only go badly for you: 37F

III.1.6.3 POT and Its Deeper Meaning.

Two readers pointed to this tale.

Lessons/Moral

- it is not always bad to act on instinct: 10F
- it is not far from poor to rich: 22M

III.1.6.4 GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE TALES' DEEPER MEANING.

Three readers made general comments on the tales. They are about:

- going out in the world to experience something and to widen one's horizon: 33F
- people's ambitions: 33F

24F and 29F felt that the tales were intended to ridicule or else function as satires on fairytales and happiness: reflecting respectively on our present highly consumer-oriented society (24F); or on our future capitalist bliss (29F).

III.2 THE DANISH STORIES

In Report 2: 13, we described how the Danish tales, had been selected and modernised, viz.,

Per Smed's Whip (henceforth Per),
The Girl and the Dog (henceforth Girl),
and The Prince and the Tiger Child (henceforth Prince).

Crude translations of the tales are given in Report 2: 15-23.

As mentioned, the report below is largely identical with the one in Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen 1985b.

The study stands apart from the other selection rounds in so far as we did not ask the students to indicate their sex on the answers. Accordingly they are quoted by no.s only.

2b, a modern language class at Skt. Jørgens Gymnasium comprised 16 girls and 3 boys (teacher: Elisabeth Kristiansson). They are numbered 1 to 19. The stories were handed out by CD on 10 March 1980, and the answers collected on 17 March. In class there was one question concerning the name of the brothers Grimm (which one participant could not remember off-hand), and another one about how the word "symbolic" was to be understood. The answer to the first question was straightforward, the answer to the second, that it was up to the students themselves to decide.

Some readers did not answer all questions: 1X did not answer question 1. Two readers did not answer question 3 (18X and 19X), and two lumped questions 3 and 4 together (5 and 11). Four readers did not answer question 4 (15, 17, 18, 19); and four refrained from answering question 5 (16, 17, 18, 19).*

2v of Rysensteen was a social science class. The tales were handed out by the teacher, Mr. Peter Bøge Nielsen, on 12 March with the pre-reading instruction. The answers were collected by CD on 28 March 1980 when 16 boys and 4 girls were present in class. Four of those present handed in no

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* Both in this class as well as the next one, incomplete protocols were placed at the end of the analysis, after they had been checked for cribbing. Hence the "last" readers appear less responsive than the rest.

protocols - something which could easily be hidden while the texts were put together and the students left class. On one instruction sheet, one of them explained that (s)he had not received the stories. The answers are numbered 20-35.

The only question asked in class concerned the meaning of the concept of "symbolic". Somehow or other the students in this class had been under the impression that they were to discuss the tales with the outside visitor (CD), but with the exception of one class-feature, namely a few attempts to make up an actant model (see below), this had no appreciable effect on their answers.

Two reader did not answer question 3 (33, 35), one lumped questions 3 and 4 together (20), two refrained from answering question 4 (34, 35), and only reader 35 did not answer question 5.

III.2.2 DISCUSSIONS OF THE TALES AMONG THE STUDENTS (QUESTION 5)

Fifteen of the nineteen readers from the first class (2b) answered the question as to whether thay had discussed the fairytales with their classmates.

Of these, eleven, reported that they had not discussed the fairytales at all (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 19).

It appeared from the comments by the last four readers that although only one stressed that (s)he had not changed her/his mind (2), discussions had been superficial, concentrating on which one had been best (1), the fact that they had been funny (2), not suitable for children (13), and that discussion had not touched upon symbolism and interpretation (15).

Fifteen of the sixteen participants in the second class, 2v, answered the question. Six had not discussed the fairytales (21, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30), while another vaguely indicated this had not been the case (24: "Nej, egentlig ikke").

Seven of the eight students who had discussed the fairytales stressed that they had not changed their minds about the fairytales, and accordingly, they still thought they were unpleasant and a far cry from normal fairytales (31); written in a childish language and not old (33); artificial, a fact revealed by the use of expressions like "arse" (in Girl), "put a bunch of grass up between her legs" (in Per)(20); bad and muddled (22); and too difficult to understand properly (27) . Only two readers did not mention what they had thought of this question (32, 34).

The last reader who discussed the fairytales (23) thought that the discussion had shown that Prince had been easier to understand in depth.

III.2.3 THE READERS' PREFERENCE (QUESTION 1)

Only one reader had no preferences - the reason being that all the tales followed the same pattern (19). The other thirty-four readers had little

difficulty in identifying the fairytales they liked best - or disliked the least.

Four participants found their favourite tale by exclusion, readers 9 and 30 by picking the one they disliked the least; and the other two by saying that they preferred the one fairytale they felt they understood (11, 21).

Three readers compared all stories (22, 23, 31); four readers Per and Prince (14, 18, 28, 29); and one reader Girl and Prince (33).

Most readers, however, chose to explain why they preferred one specific fairytale, without mentioning the others.

Popularity

In absolute figures, Per was the most popular fairytale with sixteen readers (3, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 30, 35).

Prince was favoured by nine readers (2, 4, 5, 11, 13, 17, 20, 23, 31).

And seven readers preferred Girl (1, 6, 8, 9, 32, 33, 34).

The Arguments for the Readers' Preferences

A breakdown of the arguments advanced to support preference or rejection of each fairytale is as follows:

III.2.3.1 GIRL: Arguments in connection with Girl.

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities:

- it is the least vulgar fairytale: 1 reader (32).
- it sets your imagination to work: 1 reader (1).

Formal features:

- genre features: 5 readers (1, 6, 9, 32, 34). Set in an unspecified past it is easy for young people to understand (1); with a real fairytale ending (6); it sticks to the rules for fairytales (34).

Narrative style:

- the style was uncomplicated and cute (8); like Hans Andersen (9): 2 readers
- Negative. The use of the word "arse" was disruptive to the fairytale atmosphere: 1 reader (20).
- Negative. [plot?]. It was jerky ("springende"): 1 reader (22).

Elements:

- it had three tasks: 3 readers (9, 33, 34); which were more varied than in the other fairytales (33), and a prince (9).
- it has a happy ending (34; 6 "a fairytale ending"): 2 readers.

Plot/Action

- the plot was varied and suspenseful: 2 readers (33, 34).
- Negative. The plot and the ending were incompatible: 2 readers (21, 30).

- one can make an "actant-model": 1 reader (34 - who draws it up).

Theme

- a poor girl marries a prince: 2 readers (1, 9).

"Appeal"

- because of its simplicity you did not have to think much: 1 reader (8).

III.2.3.2 PER: Arguments in connection with Per.

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it was funny or humorous: 8 readers (3, 7, 10, 15, 27, 29, 30, 35). Some pointed to the pærtegøjj (7, 12) or the ending (29)
- empathy/sympathy with Per, the protagonist: 2 readers (7, 10).

Formal features

- the description is realistic, down-to-earth: 4 readers (7, 10, 14, 18).
- genre features: the least number of the often boring repetitions in tales: 1 reader (16). Negative: it is traditional when compared to Prince: 1 reader (23).

Elements

- although it contains some of the traditional fairytale elements, e.g. an old woman, and the magic figure of 3, it is still suspenseful ("overraskende"): 1 reader (3) [16 also refers to the old woman as representing the supernatural].
- it has a happy ending: 1 reader (18).

Plot/Action

- the plot/intrigue etc. is good: 5 readers: it contains moments of suspense (3) like a drama with some task involving the protanist's life and a secret love affair (16); the plot progresses chronologically (22); it is the most coherent one (30); and the ending is consistent with the preceding action - as opposed to the other tales (21).

Theme

- the protagonist is victorious: 1 reader (24).

"Appeal"

- it is the easiest one to understand: 1 reader (29)
- it appeals most to me, and has the best moral: 1 reader (26).

III. 2.3.3 PRINCE: Arguments in Connection with Prince

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it is the least vulgar fairytale: 1 reader (31)
- it is the most humorous/funniest one: 2 readers (2, 18)
- it is the least traditional/most alien one: 1 reader (23)
- it sets your imagination to work: 1 reader (13)
- Negative. It is not very realistic, e.g. to have a man become pregnant: 1 reader (14).

Formal features

- Genre features: 6 readers. It is the most typical fairytale: 5 readers (4, 11, 17, 20, 31); it has some (specified) fairytale themes (17) and some (specified) fairytale elements (31). It has untraditional features, e.g. the man who gets pregnant: 1 reader (2).

Language/Style

- the language is worth noting: 2 readers. It is devoid of modern features (20); some phrases are unusual (5).

Elements

- it has episodes involving the supernatural: 1 reader (17)
- it has the magic figure of three: 1 reader (20)
- it has typical fairytale elements viz., a young couple, an enemy (the in-law) who tries to disrupt the married bliss, a happy ending, the well-deserved punishment, and royalty (31).

Plot/Action

- the plot follows that of typical fairytales: 1 reader (31)
- is suspenseful and has a moral: 1 reader (17)
- the ending is good: 1 reader (28)
- Negative. There is no consistency between the plot and the ending: 1 reader (21). The action/plot is jerky/muddled: 2 readers (22, 30).
- it is easy to set up an "actant-model": 1 reader (20).

Theme

- good (the prince) and evil (the mother-in-law) are personified: 1 reader (17).

"Meaning"

- "I did not really grasp the other two" (11)
- the tale can be interpreted at different levels [which are not specified]: 2 readers (13, 25).

III.2.4 FAMILIAR OR ALIEN CHARACTER OF THE STORIES (QUESTION 2).

Three of the thirty-five readers refrained from comitting themselves on this point. One by implying the question could not be answered (34); one by saying they were neither Danish, nor exotic (19); one by answering in a totally incomprehensible way (23).

Three readers answered that none of the tales was particularly Danish or foreign; all were traditional tales with hero/heroine undergoing ordeals (33 - who found Prince most familiar ("almindelig")); reminiscent of other fairytales in plot, but not really old-fashioned (32 - who found Girl least modern); all tales had the traditional three tasks (1 - who found Prince most exotic).

One reader found all the tales somewhat strange: "they all have wrong tenses, wrong syntax, etc." (18 - who found Prince most exotic because of the milieu).

"Most Danish"

No reader opted for more than one fairytale. The fairytales appeared most Danish as follows:

Per: 15 readers (6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 30).
Girl: 5 readers (2, 4, 5, 9, 32).
Prince: 2 readers (28, 33).

"Least Danish/Most Alien/Exotic"

The fairytales appeared most exotic as follows:

Per: 1 reader (31).
Girl: 2 readers (7, 11).
Prince: 13 readers (1, 3, 8, 12, 15, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30).

Arguments about the Provenance of the Tales

A breakdown of the arguments advanced runs as follows:

III.2.4.1 GIRL: Arguments about Its Provenance.

"Danish"/Familiar

Formal features

- genre features: I associate the German brothers Grimm with Danish fairytales, and this tale one is most like theirs: 1 reader (9).

Language

- the language is most Danish: 2 readers (4, 5); and vulgar (5).

Style

- [possible genre feature]: the vulgar ending is typical of modern Danish writing: 1 reader (4).

Elements

- the girl facing impossible tasks who is helped by a transformed prince is typical of Danish fairytales: 1 reader (2).

Plot/Action: [unspecified]: 1 reader (5).

Alien/Exotic/"non-Danish"

Tonal/Affective qualities:

- it is cruel and grim: 2 readers (7, 11).
- not romantic in style: 1 reader (11).
- a bit vulgar and perverted: 1 reader (11).

Plot/Action:

- dramatic compared to Per: 1 reader (17 - who favours Per).

III.2.4.2 PER: Arguments about Its Provenance.

"Danish"/Familiar

Formal features

- genre features: 2 readers. The fairytale is reminiscent of some of Andersen's tales (14, 17). [The reference may actually be to the setting (i.e. manor-houses etc.)].

Elements

- the name of Per: 3 readers (6, 15, 21)
- no un-Danish animals and customs: 1 reader (6)
- the titels/denomination of jobs/positions (e.g. "forvalter" (steward), "herremand" (squire)): 3 readers (10, 16, 30)
- * the impossible tasks, the old woman, the happy ending are all typically Danish: 1 reader (7) *
- the manor (house) ("herregård"): 3 readers (14, 20, 30)
- "daler" (i.e. the coins): 2 readers (20, 30)
- the wood: 1 reader (14)
- the setting: 7 readers (10, 16, 22, 25, 27, 30,35); it is typical of Denmark from the feudal epoch with manor-houses).

Theme

- it is unusual to hear about a woman who wants to be unfaithful: 1 reader (13).

Alien/Exotic/"Non-Danish"

Miscellaneous: 1 reader (31)

- " the plot is very special, in so far as there is no young couple to marry or the like; Per forgives his wife (which is highly unusual); there is no royalty, and the fight against the enemies goes on in a very odd way." (31).

III.2.4.3 PRINCE: Arguments about Its Provenance.

"Danish"/Familiar

Tonal/Affective qualities

- it has a Danish atmosphere ("man føler den danske ånd"): 1 reader (28).

Alien/Exotic/"non-Danish"

Tonal/Affective qualities

- it is grim: 1 reader (17).

Elements

- a wise woman does not belong in a fairytale: 1 reader (32)
- * the salmon is non-Danish: 1 reader (12) *
- the tiger is un-Danish: 9 readers (8, 12, 15, 16, 22, 24, 27, 30, 35); it should be associated with Eastern countries: 2 readers (22, 30), and was hardly known in the middle ages: 1 reader (29)
- the unidentifiable setting is un-Danish: 2 readers (1, 18)

- * wars are unusual in a Danish context: 1 reader (30) *

Specific actions/circumstances

- infertility is usually taboo and untraditional:1 reader (3)
- the man's pregnancy: 1 reader (16)
- the idea of eating children is un-Danish: 1 reader (16)
- the idea of a tiger bringing up a child is alien: 3 readers - and reminiscent of the JungleBook (Kipling) (30), an Indian tradition with "wolf-children" as in Kipling's story (35)
- the idea of putting children in chests into a stream reminds one of Moses in the Bible: 1 reader (35).

Plot/Action:

- it is dramatic compared to Per: 1 reader (17).

III.2.5 THE SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 3).

Four readers failed to answer the question (18, 19, 33, 35).
One reader did not understand the question (25).
Five rejected the idea out of hand with emphatic "No"s (7, 21, 22, 28, 30).
Two did not see any obvious symbols (3, 20).
One reader found that although the figure three and supernatural events were present, the action was explained by means of words, not symbols (31).
The answers were rarely holistic and usually focussed on only some few elements of ideas, even though the answers tended to be better phrased and more cogent than the following breakdown suggests:

III.2.5.1 GIRL and Symbolic Elements

Eight readers mentioned it (1, 2, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 29). Three of them liked it best.

- magic figures: 1 reader (6)
- the helper who assists the weak person and brings about a happy ending: 1 reader (2)
- the protagonist is a symbol of purity and innocence: 1 reader (12)
- the kiss symbolises that physical contact may help a lot (and I do not think of sex): 1 reader (17)
- even lowly and humble people can achieve happiness and get married if they show faith in somebody else: 1 reader (8)
- it symbolises the transition from childhood to adulthood: 1 reader (29)
- it is symbolic in having a moral: 1 reader (1)
- one has to undergo ordeals to achieve happiness: 1 reader (1)
- one should never give up: 3 readers (1, 13, 14); and be willing to undergo ordeals such as going to hell to achieve happiness (1); not despairing even if the outlook is bleak (13); and trying to manage in adverse conditions (14).

III.2.5.2 PER and Symbolic Elements

Five readers mentioned it (6, 12, 13, 14, 17).

Of these two favoured it most.
- magic figures: 1 reader (6)
- the protagonist represents what is good and just, even if he is nor pure and innocent: 1 reader (12)
- the pærtegøjj is connected with people's stupidity/insensitivity ("dumhed"): 1 reader (13)
- the whip is a symbol of rule, of how one can gain the upper hand, power: 1 reader (17).
- it is a symbol of the power one may exert if one owns a terrifying weapon: 1 reader (14).

III.2.5.3 PRINCE and Symbolic Elements

Twelve readers (2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 26, 29), only one of whom had liked it best.
- magic figures: 1 reader (6 - who chose the tale for his example).
- the helper who assists the weak person and brings about a happy ending: 1 reader (2, as in the reader's response to Girl above)
- the salmon is a symbol of fertility: 2 readers (10, 14)
- the salmon is a symbol of death and negligence, the latter visited on the tiger child: 1 reader (17)
- the tiger child's muteness is a symbol of repression in the world: 1 reader (17)
- the protagonist is a symbol of purity and innocence: 1 reader (12; same as the reader's response to Girl above); a symbol of goodness and wisdom: 1 reader (15)
- the mother-in-law is a symbol of evil: 1 reader (15); a symbol of jealousy: 1 reader (5).
- the prince, representing Good in the tale, goes on forgiving: 1 reader (10)
- the tale touches upon the problem about who can bear children (and then of course, it is funny that the man gets pregnant): 1 reader (11)
- class differences and the ensuing jealousy: 1 reader (4 - 5 has copied the idea ineptly).
- the transition from childhood to adulthood: 1 reader (29).

III.2.5.4 General Comments on Symbolic Elements

Eleven readers made some kind of general comments.
- all fairytales have a symbolic meaning: 4 readers. Two did not specify this (24, 34), whereas the other two mentioned some features in one of the tales (8, 15)
- all fairytales have a moral message: if you are good, you get what you are striving for: 1 reader (9)
- there are magic figures, especially the figure 3: 4 readers (1, 6, 23, 32).
- there are supernatural powers/elements/happenings, such as old women, magic means, dwarfs, transformations: 2 readers (23, 32 - who both mention one of the features in the list)
- supernatural beings are symbols of good and evil: 1reader (6)
- it is possible to set up "actant-models" for the tales: 1 reader (32)
- the things always symbolise something from the time when the fairytales were taken down, viz., hopeless dreams, things one has to give up: 1 reader (1)
- the supernatural elements and actions are symbols of something in ordinary life: 1 reader (27)
- all of them contain symbols, some of them sexual: 1 reader (16).

III.2.6 THE"DEEPER MEANING" IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 4)

Five of the thirty-five readers failed to answer the question: (15, 17, 18, 34, 35).

Ten readers answered "No". Four of them flatly so (21, 22, 31, 32), two because they considered fairytales as entertainment only (2, 28 - who added that in order to appeal to the real audience, viz. children, they had to have suspense). Another reader added that "the man who gives birth to a girl disturbs me, but I do not know what is wrong" (30). One reader did not find a deeper meaning ("Nej, ikke umiddelbart") (3). And finally two readers insisted that the stories had a moral (8, 9), in so far as they did not contain social criticism, or attacks on individuals (9).

One reader found a deeper meaning only in Per - but did not specify what it was (4).

One reader was sure there was one, but had been unable to find it because of the many symbols (27).

Four readers referred to the answers they had given to question 3 (1, 5, 11, 20).

It is possible to divide the answers into "it shows" and "lessons" (the latter characterised by the use of words like "bør" (i.e. ought to), "skal" (should(not)).

III.2.6.1 GIRL and Its "Deeper Meaning".

Three readers (16, 25, 33) mentioned Girl:

It shows

- wishful thinking: that by undergoing ordeals, humble people may rise in society, and become happy: 1 reader (33).

Lessons/moral

- it pays to help those who are weak and to take their advice: 1 reader (16)
- one can overcome all obstacles by helping others first: 1 reader (25).

III.2.6.2 PER and Its "Deeper Meaning".

Seven readers (10, 14, 16, 24, 25, 29, 33) referred to Per:

It shows

- adultery does not pay: 1 reader (10).

Lessons/moral

- one should not play around with others' wives: 1 reader (29)
- it is a moral warning against infidelity and falseness: 2 readers (24, 33)
- infidelity is bad and should not be hidden, since it will always be found out: 1 reader (14)
- the woman who stays at home and looks after her husband is doing right: 1 reader (16)
- one must be able to forgive and forget: 1 reader (10)
- one should not run away from problems but solve them as they turn up: 1 reader (14)

- one should not give up - by assiduity one will always attain one's goal: 1 reader (25)
- in the end justice is always done, even if one feels there is no help: somewhere, there's always some kind of an "old woman": 1 reader (16).

III.2.6.3 PRINCE and Its "Deeper Meaning".

Five readers (16, 25, 26, 29, 33) listed Prince:

It shows

- wishful thinking: that humble people, by undergoing ordeals may rise in society, and become happy: 1 reader (33, same as the same reader's response to Girl).
- that mothers-in-law are awful: 1 reader (25)
- a picture of society: the tiger is an orphanage, and the mother-in-law represents (established) society: 1 reader (26)
- good winning over evil: 3 readers (16, 29, 33), with justice victorious in the end (16)
- a social conflict: 1 reader (25).

Lesson/Moral

- that men should refrain from meddling in others' affairs: it only leads to disaster: 1 reader (25).

III.2.6.4 GENERAL COMMENTS on the "Deeper Meaning".

Five readers made comments applying to all three fairytales (6, 7, 12, 13, 23), and in addition, two of those who had referred to specific tales, also stressed that all fairytales have a deeper meaning (25, 26)

- they deal with human life and destiny ("mennesket og dets skæbne"): 1 reader (7)
- no matter what ordeals/repression/exploitation the protagonist is subjected to, (s)he always ends up happy: 2 readers (13, 23)
- good will always win in the end: 1 reader (12)
- the purpose of the tales is to instruct and exhort the listeners: 1 reader (12)
- no one should rule over others and determine their lives: 1 reader (6)
- everybody, animal or human, should be equal: 1 reader (6)
- humble people should show those who are strong that they misbehave, by using the same dirty ways and means: 1 reader (6)
- there should be no difference between rich and poor: 1 reader (6).

Miscellaneous Comments

To all questions - but not registered previously: all the tales are funny and original: 1 reader (7) - all are perverted: 1 reader (12).

The tales appeared artificial (reader no. 20). Some symbols appear very artificial (reader no. 27). Note: by using the word "konstruerede" the two last readers imply that we had made up the tales. Both students had discussed the stories with others.

III. 3 THE GREENLANDIC TALES

In Report 2: 23-24, we described how the Greenlandic tales were selected and translated. The ones used in the present empirical selection study were:

Qilugtussat (henceforth Pleiad)
The Body Snatcher Troll (henceforth Snatcher)
Navaranapaluk (henceforth Nava)
The Deserted Girls (henceforth Deserted)

The tales are given in English translation in Report 2: 25-34.

III.3.1 The Readers

The stories were handed out in class by the teacher in 2z of the science branch of the Vallensbæk Statsskole and the answers were collected by BK on 8 May 1984. In class there was one question about the meaning of the word "symbolic" and another one to the effect that the reader could not tell any difference between questions 3 and 4. The twenty participants were numbered 1-20. There were 10 girls (1F, 2F, 3F, 4F, 13F, 14D, 15F, 18F, 19F, 20F), and 10 boys (5M, 6M, 7M, 8M, 9M, 10M, 11M, 12M, 16M, 17M).

17M failed to answer questions 1 and 5; and two readers, 13F and 20F, lumped the answers to questions 3 and 4 together.

In 2c, from the modern language branch of Rødovre Statsskole (teacher: Mads Thranholm) the texts were handed out with the pre-reading instruction on 26 April 1984 by CD, and the questions in class were posed and collected on 3 May 1984 by CD.

Nobody asked any question in class. There were twenty-one students, and they were numbered 21-41. There were eleven girls (24F, 25F, 26F, 27F, 28F, 29F, 30F, 31F, 32F, 33F, 39F), and nine boys (22M, 23M, 34M, 35M, 36M, 37M, 38M, 40M, 41M). One reader, 21X, failed to indicate his/her sex.

21X did not answer questions 2 and 4; 32F failed to answer question 4; and 23M to answer question 5.

III.3.2 Discussions of the stories among the students (question 5)

In the first class, 2z of Vallensbæk, nineteen readers answered the question. Five said they had not discussed them with others (6M, 7M, 9M, 10M, 12M). 16M did not report if he had discussed the stories with others, but hinted that a re-reading had changed his views, although he failed to tell us how.

Thirteen students said they had discussed the stories (1F, 2F, 3F, 4F, 5M, 8M, 11M, 13F, 14F, 15F, 18F, 19F, 20F). The discussions concerned the strange contents, the abrupt transitions, and sometimes the cruelty. There were however, no reports to the effect that any reader in this class had changed her/his mind because of the discussion.

In the second class, 2a of Rødovre, twenty readers answered the question. Twelve had not discussed the stories with thier classmates (22M, 25F, 28F, 29F, 32F, 33F, 36M, 37M, 38M, 40M, 41M), although 28F mentioned that re-reading the stories might change her opinion. Eight readers had discussed the stories, and seven of them had apparently done so in class (26F, 27F, 30F, 31F, 34F, 35M, 39F); it is obvious from the comments that the discussion had centred on their alien, odd, or strange character, on the ubiquitous nature of death and violence, and the abruptness. 27F was the only one to mention that the discussions had had an effect: her attention had been called to the multitude of openings (to caves, houses, and the like) in the tales.

21X had read the tales at home "When I had read the stories I felt pretty odd." And (s)he therefore turned the stories over to her/his sister who thought they were muddled (with which the reader agreed), "but she also thought they were not very exciting and interesting. On that point I stuck to my opinion that they had made a strange impression on me."

III.3.2.1 General Comments

Several readers added some GENERAL COMMENTS on the tales:

1. The tales are bad/totally uninteresting/completely meaningless:
   4 readers (7M, 12M, 31F, 40M). 31F adds that it was a waste of time reading them. 40M stated that the texts were intentionally meaningless and nonsensical in order to test how much senior high-school pupils can find in them.
2. The tales are interesting/funny:
   2 readers (34M, 39F). 34M added that the classmates he discussed the tales with agreed with this.
3. The tales are difficult to understand/strange:
   13 readers (1F, 2F, 4F, 8M, 13F, 14F, 15F, 18F, 21X, 26F, 30F, 34M, 35M).
4. The tales are not for children/brutal/macabre/full of violence:
   7 readers (5M, 8M, 13F, 18F, 26F, 30F, 31F).

III.3.3 The readers' preferences (question 1)

All forty-one except one (7M who wavered between Pleiad and Nava (and is listed at both)) indicated a preference for one of the tales. Some participants, however, had reservations in their choice of the tale they liked best either because they found that all the tales were bad: 5 readers (30F, 31F, 38M, 37M, 40M); or because they found them all good: 2 readers (9M, 10M). The readers who have explicitly made such reservations are listed in parentheses in the popularity count of each tale.

Two readers made a few general comments on all the tales (both found all the tales good) and mentioned a specific tale which they liked but without explaining why they liked it (9M, 10M). Three other readers compared the tale

they preferred with one of the other tales: Snatcher and The Deserted (16M), The Deserted and Nava (24F, 27F).

Seventeen readers explained only why they preferred one specific tale: seven commented on Pleiad only(1F, 4F, 20F, 35M, 36M, 37M, 38M), four commented on Nava (2F, 3F, 6M, 34M), four commented on Snatcher (8M, 12M, 23M, 29F), and 2 stuck exclusively to Girls (11M, 18F). Seventeen others specified which tale they preferred and made some general comment on the other three tales (5M, 13F, 14F, 21X, 26F, 30F, 32F, 15F, 22M, 28F, 33F, 41F, 19F, 31F, 39F, 40M, 25F).

III.3.3.1 Popularity

The Deserted was favoured by twelve readers (5M, (9M), 11M, 13F, 14F, 18F, 21X, 24F, 26F, 27F, (30F), 32F).

Nava was favoured by eleven readers (2F, 3F, 6M, (7M), (10M), 15F, 22M, 28F, 33F, 34M, 41M).

Snatcher was favoured by nine readers (8M, 12M, 16M, 19F, 23M, 29F, (31F), 39F, (40M)).

Pleiad was favoured by nine readers (1F, 4F, (7M), 20F, 25F, 35M, 36M, (37M), (38M)).

III.3.3.2 The Arguments for the Readers' Preferences

III.3.3.2.1 PLEIAD: Arguments in Connection with Pleiad

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it is less incomprehensible and confusing than the other tales: 20F, 25F
- it captivates the reader: 35M
- it is funny because it is so unrealistic: 37M, 38M.

Themes

- it deals with keeping one's promises: 1F
- it deals with morals: 4F, 20F
- it has a good/funny explanation of the constellation the Pleiads: 3 readers (4F, 35M, 37M - 35M adds that the explanation is different in Greek mythology)
- it depicts animal ferocity (bears): 35M
- it describes the whole problem of the public and private sphere: 36M
- it deals with the patriarchal society, its norms, its doublestandards i.e. corruption: 36M
- many of the Ten Commandments turn up in the story: 36M.

Miscellaneous

- I like mythological tales: 37M
- both 37M and 38M give lengthy explanations about myths, modern astronomy, science, etc. (their contents and phrasing vary, however).

III.3.3.2.2 SNATCHER: Arguments in Connection with Snatcher

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- something mysterious and thriller-like about it: 8M
- it is exciting: 12M, 19F
- it is the most clear/well-arranged tale: 29F
- it is the most "normal" of the tales: 30F
- it is less violent than the other tales: 31F
- it is less confusing and more coherent than the other tales: 39F
- it has the best ending: 16M, 29F
- it has the best causal relations, thus there is a reason for the murder(s): 40M.

Formal features

- it has a beginning and an end: 39F.

Genre features

- it was the most fairytale-like story: 29F.

Themes

- the good triumph over the evil: 8M
- "he is personally doing something to stop what he feels is wrong": 8M
- you should leave the dead alone and not disturb their graves: 12M
- it is a man who makes short work of a woman: 12M (argument in favour of the tale).

Narrative style

- it was the best narrated one: 19F.

III.3.3.2.3 NAVA: Arguments in Connection with Nava

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it was the most exciting tale: 6M
- it was less mysterious than the other tales: 15F
- it was less abstract and more coherent than the other tales: 22M
- it was easy to read: 2F
- it had the most understandable and acceptable ending: 41M
- it was the most realistic tale: 3 readers (33F, 34M, 6M).

Plot/Action

- it had the best plot: 28F.

Themes/symbols

- it deals with a family feud: 22M
- it reflects "Nemesis"; revenge on the guilty one (the revenge of the Gods): 10M
- Negative. Nava is exploited by her husband: 27F.

Narrative style

- it is the best narrated tale: 28F.

Miscellaneous

- it had some action: 3F
- it had some sense: 2F, 3F.

III.3.3.2.4 DESERTED: Arguments in Connection with Deserted

Affective/evaluative/tonal qualities

- it is entertaining: 5M
- there is less bloodthirst and violence than in the other tales: 13F, 18F
- it is easier to understand the motives of the characters than in the other tales: 24F
- it is less mysterious and violent than the other tales: 14F
- it is more traditional/normal than the other tales: 26F, 30F
- it is the most "realistic" tale: 32F.

Genre features

- "this is closest to what I understand by a fairytale (e.g. it has a happy ending)": 18F.

Plot/Action

- Negative. The motive for killing the girl is weak: 13F.

Themes

- the girls triumph over their husbands (good over evil): 11M
- the girls attain their goal (namely finding their parents) although they have been confronted with problems on the way: 21X
- the girls succeed in escaping from their husbands: 27F.

Miscellaneous

- it has a happy ending: 6 readers (11M, 13F, 14F, 18F, 21X, 24F)
- it has a moral: 26F
- Negative. It has a rather odd ending: 16M.

III.3.3.3 General Comments

Many readers commented on the tale in general. In the main these comments are negative, and in most instances the tale favoured most is not mentioned.

- their plots unravel too fast: 13F
- they have abrupt/strange endings: 4 readers (9M, 13F, 14F, 19F)
- they are mysterious/too fantastic/have elements of superstition and the supernatural 4 readers (6M, 14F, 15F, 33F)
- they are difficult to understand/confusing/meaningless/incoherent/abstract: 6 readers (19F, 20F, 22M, 25F, 28F, 39F)
- they are macabre/violent/brutal/bloodthirsty: 6 readers (5M, 13F, 14F, 18F, 21X, 31F)
- they are bad: 3 readers (37M, 38M, 40M)
- they are boring: 19F
- they are ridiculous and vulgar: 30F
- the narrative style is poor: 41M.

III.3.4 FAMILIAR ("DANISH") OR ALIEN CHARACTER OF THE STORIES (QUESTION 2)

Two of the forty readers thought this depended on whether Greenland was taken as part of Denmark or not (4F, 22M). 15F stated that the "least alien story" to her, viz. Navà, might well take place in Greenland. And 36M found none of the tales particularly Danish or alien. Accordingly, these readers are not included in the lists below.

Eleven readers considered more than one tale alien (5M, 10M, 11M, 13F, 14F, 16M, 20F, 27F, 29F, 33F, 41M), and two (27F, 41M) of them thought all four tales were alien.

Two readers considered more than one tale Danish (26F, 40M).

Six readers mentioned only the tale they found most Danish (2F, 3F, 28F, 30F, 34M, 37M); and, conversely, five readers referred only to the tale which was "most alien" (6M, 8M, 25F, 35M, 38M).

The readers who considered more than one tale alien or Danish are listed by all stories they mentioned.

"Most Danish"/Most Familiar

Nava: no readers

Pleiad: 2 readers (1F, 40M)

Deserted: 12 readers (3F, 5M, 16M, 23M, 26F, 28F, 30F, 31F, 32F, 33F, 39F, 40M)

Snatcher: 17 readers (1F, 7M, 9M, 10M, 11M, 12M, 13F, 14F, 17M, 18F, 19F, 24F, 26F, 29F, 34M, 37M, 40M).

"Least Danish"/most alien/exotic"

Nava: 26 readers (5M, 6M, 7M, 8M, 10M, 11M, 13F, 14F, 16M, 17M, 18F, 19F, 20F, 23M, 25F, 26F, 27F, 29F, 31F, 32F, 33F, 38M, 39F, 40M, 41M)

Pleiad: 12 readers (5M, 10M, 11M, 13F, 14F, 16M, 20F, 24F, 27F, 29F, 33F, 41M)

Deserted: 10 readers (1F, 10M, 11M, 12M, 13F, 20F, 22M, 27F, 35M, 41M)

Snatcher: 4 readers (5M, 27F, 33F, 41M).

III.3.4.1 PLEIAD: Arguments about Its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

- one recognizes several things from old Danish myths: 1F.

Alien/exotic/"non-Danish"

Elements

- the animals (bears and seals): 5 readers (11M, 14F, 27F, 29F, 33F)
- the landscape: 20F, 29F
- it is a different culture: 27F
- the names: 29F.

Plot/action

- the plot could not have taken place in Denmark (Greenland): 10M
- macabre: 5M
- perverted and disgusting: 24F.

Norms

- * Danes would not explain constellations by means of myths. We have always used the Bible: 16M *.

III.3.4.2 SNATCHER: Arguments about Its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

Elements

- the landscape could be Danish: 3 readers (7M, 9M, 17M)
- the animals fit with an (old-fashioned) Danish setting (no bears, but wolves): 5 readers (9M, 11M, 12M, 17M, 29F)
- the werewolf is a creature we have heard about: 18F.

Plot/action

- the action might well take place in Denmark: 10M
- it reminds me of something [not specified] I have heard before: 7M
- less bloodthirsty than e.g. Nava: 18F
- it is reminiscent of Danish fairytales: 4 readers (2F, 13F, 19F, 34M); - H.C. Andersen: 34M
- it resembles "Little Red Riding Hood", a man-eating wolf that dies in the end because of a cunning creature/human. Typical of Danish fairytales that man "triumphs" over animals/trolls in the end: 37M.

Language

- phrases like "grow wide, little river" and "grow big, hill" sound familiar: 37M

Alien/exotic/"non-Danish"

Plot/action

- macabre: 5M.

Elements

- the landscape (there are no rivers in Denmark):20F
- different culture: 27F
- animals (e.g. bears): 3 readers (15F, 27F, 33F).

III.3.4 NAVA: Arguments about Its Provenance

No reader advanced any argument that Nava was Danish.

Alien/exotic/"non-Danish"

Elements

- poles in the corpses (association to Indian customs): 38M
- the sceneries: 4 readers (17M, 20F, 29F, 31F)
- the names: 9 readers: (6M, 9M, 19F, 20F, 23M, 25F, 29F, 32F, 39); - are Greenlandic (6M, 9M)
- the location is Greenland, Svalbard or some place far North: 5 readers (6M, 10M, 13F, 27F, 35F)
- it describes a (totally) different culture: 5 readers (7M, 14F, 17M, 25F, 27F)
- it describes customs which are little known to us/strange: 8M, 17M
- shamanizing: (9M, 14F, 17M, 38M)
- they go hunting (9M)
- the words (25F)
- the title of the tale (9M, 38M)
- animals (walrusses, wolves, bears): 5 readers (11M, 15F, 27F, 29F, 33F)
- eskimoes: 5 readers (11M, 31F, 33F, 38M, 40M).

Plot/action

- the action and milieu is unmistakably Greenlandic: 10M
- cruelties, blood feuds, robbing of women, killings, macabre and barbaric acts: 5 readers (5M, 7M, 8M, 18F, 26F)
- it is difficult to understand the motives e.g. why the man drilled into Nava's knee: 19F
- too many things happen at the same time: 39F.

III. 3.4.4 DESERTED: Arguments about Its Provenance

"Danish"/Familiar

Language/narrative style

- the way it is written seems most Danish/is fine for reading aloud: 5M, 39F
- the language is everyday-like/straightforward: 28F, 39F
- "it sounds Danish, perhaps because it is written in the style of Hans Andersen, and because it begins with "Once upon a time". "32F.

Plot/action

- it has a traditional structure, two little girls, evil people, etc.: 16M
- the opening is like that of "Hansel and Gretel": 30F
- it reminds me of "Snow White" and "The Sleeping Beauty": 31F

Alien/exotic

Plot/action

- these events could not have taken place in Denmark: 10M.

Norms

- "Killing has never been allowed in Denmark, even if [a girl] could not become pregnant": 1F
- people almost never abandon their children: 12M, 22M.

Elements

- walrus teeth: 5 readers (11M, 12M, 13F, 15F, 35F)
- eskimoes: 11M
- landscape (rocks): 13F, 20F
- different culture: 27F
- magic formulae: 35M
- "cast aside the flap" (a direct quotation from the tale): 35M.

III.3.5 THE SYMBOLIC ELEMENTS IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 3)

Five of the forty-one readers found nothing symbolic in the stories (7M, 15F, 16M, 35M, 39F).

Nine readers stated that the tales were symbolic but failed to specify how and why (4F, 6M, 18F, 25F, 28F, 30F, 37M, 41M).

21X thought there were symbols in the tales but that only Greenlanders could interpret them, whereas 40M believed that there was no intentional symbolism in the tales.

III.3.5.1 PLEIAD and Symbolic Elements

- when she betrays the bear, she suffers a cruel death: 10M
- the woman is killed because she tells on the bears: 9M, 10M, 11M (with completely different phrasings).
- the man and wife are symbols of Adam and Eve: 33F
- you should not tell on other people: 20F
- the engineer hoist with his own petard: 20F
- good (the bear) triumphs over evil (the woman): 11M
- man gradually kills off animals: 29F
- there should be no human interference in the animal kingdom: 34M.

III.3.5.2 SNATCHER and Symbolic Elements

- heroism: 10M
- good triumphs over evil: 11M, 20F
- you should not disturb the dead in their graves: 12M
- there must be no human interference in the animal kingdom: 34M.

III.3.5.3 NAVA and Symbolic Elements

- shamanizing: 13F, 14F
- revenge triumphs over everything else: 20F
- good triumphs over evil: 11M
- when you seek revenge, you must dig two graves [implicit: one for yourself, too]: 11M

III.3.5.4 DESERTED and Symbolic Elements

- walrus teeth: symbol of strength and life: 27F
- walrus teeth: phallic symbols: 31F
- the girls have control over the ice - biblical association (the parting of the waters): 31F
- the youngest girl takes the initiative and is rewarded: 22M
- good triumphs over evil: 11M.

III.3.5.5 General Comments on All Tales

- everything ends as it should (including the woman's loss of her head; she deserved it): 2F, 3F
- fate punishes the guilty/in the end the guilty will be punished: 3 readers (1F, 10M, 12M)
- when people do things they ought not to, they will be punished: 5M
- all the tales are about suffering (murder and blood): 13F, 27F
- in all the tales they kill each other (or try to do so): 8M
- perverted sexuality, crude carnal love: 23M
- the animals are something dangerous: 14F
- the animals represent gods/demons: 17M
- you should take care not to make other people unhappy: 26F
- all the tales are about survival: 27F
- Freudian symbolism: 36M
- sexual symbolism (the opening operations of fissures; poles in bodies, etc.; as well as sado-masochism when beaten or drilled in the knees): 38M,

III.3.6 THE "DEEPER MEANING" IN THE STORIES (QUESTION 4)

Six of the thirty-seven readers found no deeper meaning in the tales (3F, 14F, 31F, 33F, 35M, 40M). 3F added that the tales were bad, unrealistic, silly, and repulsive.

Eleven readers found that one/some/all of the tales had a deeper meaning but did not specify or explain what it was (2F, 5M, 11M, 16M, 17M, 25F, 27F, 34M, 36M, 37M, 41M). 36M and 37M said that they had not time to answer the question.

19F stated that she is not good at analysing texts (and especially not these ones because they are a strange) - and therefore refrained from answering the question.

III.3.6.1 PLEIAD and Its "Deeper Meaning"

Lessons/moral

- betrayal does not pay: the woman is punished, she is killed by the bear: 6M
- one should keep one's promises and appreciate favours: 7M
- the girl betrays the bears, even though they have treated her well, and is punished: 8M
- one should not betray someone who treats you well: 9M
- you ought not to lie: 15F
- it is about jealousy: 30F.

III.3.6.2 SNATCHER and Its "Deeper Meaning"

Lessons/moral

- you should think twice and not act hastily: 22M
- you will be punished if you disturb graves: 39F.

Miscellaneous

- associations to the style of Dali: 22M.

III.3.6.3 NAVA

It shows that

- you should be careful whom you marry. Otherwise you risk being killed: 23M.
- a coarse illustration of wife abuse: 29F

Lessons/moral

- parents ought not to abandon their children: 10M.

III.3.6.4 General Comments on All Tales

The tales show:

- that it does not pay only to think of oneself and not consider the results of one's actions: 12M
- that betrayal/crime does not pay: 10M
- you ought to be good and do nothing unethical: 1F
- you should stay at home and look after your husband: 18F
- crises between men and women at a very primitive level: 24F
- relations between men and women, sexual relations: 28F
- sex roles: 38M
- the tales all deal with ethics: 4F.

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE RESPONSES

Some of the points in the discussion below have been made elsewhere (in Dollerup, Reventlow, Rosenberg Hansen, 1985b, 54-61), and the present treatment will therefore be somewhat briefer.

IV.I Character and Coverage of the Responses

IV. Illegitimate Answers

In the present stage of the project, we first meet with the type of statements which we have termed "illegitimate" (see also above p.14), i.e. statements which can be proved wrong in relation to the text or context in question. These answers are indicated by an asterisk.

It is, however, noteworthy that among the 115 readers there seems to be no statement which is wrong at the purely linguistic level: the illegitimate answers crop up in connection with background knowledge (in the widest sense of this word). It is, for instance, wrong to say that "coffeehouse is a Danish expression" - as does 37F in her discussion of Danish elements in Keloglan (p.22). And similarly it is wrong to say that "salmon" do not occur in Danish tales (reader 12, p. 34 above).

Even so, the illegitimate statements are few and far between - and they concern only elements in the tales.

IV.3 Limitations in Terms of Coverage of the Actual Experience

We have already discussed some of the limitations of the present material in the beginning of the present report, and a brief summary of these points will suffice:

We know that we are extremely unlikely to make all potential, and legitimate aspects of the experience of both the individual readers as well as the readers as a whole surface at this stage.

In the first place, the texts are preliminary texts made with a view only to the selection round (cf. Report 2: 6). Secondly, the responses will only be part of the response of

the experience of the readers (cf. e.g. Hansson; 1964, and Fredholm, 1974). Thirdly, the readers all come from what we must - within the scope of the present project - term a very limited group in terms of nationality and social background. And, fourthly, the responses we chart are responses to three or four tales in each group: they are by no means "pure responses" to only one tale.

Even with these limitations, we can confidently say that the method and the number of readers involved give us a solid documentation of responses elicited, which permits us to select the tales for the future work in the project. And, then, of course we can get "pure responses", unaffected by enforced comparisons.

In addition to these limitations, there are also some directives, whose influence on the responses we can, however, chart - at least to some extent.

IV.4 The Pre-reading Instructions

As mentioned (p. 9 above), the pre-reading instruction was made as uninformative as possible, referring vaguely to "some questions" which would be asked. We have no reason to assume that it affected the readers' responses in any way - apart from the obvious fact that most of them read the tales (it is reprinted as APPENDIX B, p. 62 below).

IV.5 Discussions among the students

The question of discussions with other students has been dealt with in connection with the description of the statements collected from each class (viz., pages 17;29; and 39-40, above).

The most interesting point is perhaps that 52 out of the 115 readers had not discussed the stories with their classmates at all. As far as the others are concerned, our analyses show that although some specific features apparently did draw some comments from several students, there was fairly little in-depth discussion, if any. And no reader - except perhaps 27F in the "Greenlandic group" - had had any major change in their views on the stories. As noted in the analyses there are, however, certain correspondences between some readers' statements, so there may be a few readers who have impressed their views on others, in the sense that the others have become aware of specific aspects in their own experiences: the use of 'sjove' and 'underlige' with two readers in the Turkish group, may thus well have been caused by such discussions.

IV.6 Cribbing

The atmosphere in the classes was relaxed, with the students sometimes sitting in horse-shoe formation. There might therefore have been some cribbing, and we have described (p. 11 above) how the answers were collected to make sure that we could easily reveal cribbing or discussion in between two pupils.

At the first glance at the breakdown in statements it may seem as if the incidence of cribbing was fairly high as many readers agree. But since we have gone after contents in fairly crude entities, the fact that readers are placed together or listed as having said the same does not imply that they have cribbed.

Careful analysis and comparison brings to light only the following few instances among the c. 2,500 statements:

In the "Turkish group", 26F and 27F had both put a question mark by question 3 (see p. 24 above). And at the same question 14M and 15M agreed that Apple is 'pertinent' (phrased respectively as "relevant til samfundet" (14M), and "den har relevans [sic] til samfundet"). And in answering the question about the provenance of the stories both 24F and 25F use the adjective "alien" ("fremmedartet") about the language.

In the group reading the Danish stories, readers 4 and 5 - who had not discussed the tales with others - nevertheless use the word "plat", i.e. "vulgar" when they reject Girl (question 2), and they also point to the theme of "jealousy" in connection with Prince (at question 3).

Unless we take the differently phrased complaints by 36M and 37M that they cannot answer question 3 for lack of time, there are no examples of cribbing in the "Greenlandic group". Conversely, it does contain a caution about thinking that similar phrasing is just "cribbing": 12M and 35M, who were schools and miles apart, both made the observation that here are no "walrus teeth on Danish beaches".

Even if all the above instances are really due to cribbing or private discussions in class, it must be stressed that the different contexts in which the words appear illustrate that no reader will take over a view from somebody else unless it rings a bell with him or her.

At all events the discussions among the students outside class have left more traces - and may even be behind the similarity in the statements of 24F and 25F, who had discussed the tales with others.

IV.7 Class Variables

The only class-variable to surface was to be found in the Rysensteen class in the Danish group, as three readers referred to an actantmodel. They did so in different places, viz., on Girl (reader 34), on Prince (reader 20) and on all tales (reader 32): the class had read a well-known ballad, "Germand Gladensvend", which has a fairytale embedded in it, and on that occasion an actant-model had been drawn up.

IV.8 The Questions

The strongest directive force (outside the texts themselves) was contained in the four questions on the texts. They have functioned well for our purposes - so that we could use them as headlines for the breakdown.

A few readers found questions 3 and 4, on symbols and "deeper meaning", hard, or refrained from answering them. As hinted by several comments, this may well be due to the fact that Danish readers do not associate these concepts with what they consider innocuous and entertaining fairytales and folk-tales.

IV.9 The Texts in the Experiences

One thing which stands out is that Danish readers - at least in the age group that participated in this stage of the study- expect folktales to adhere to some fairly strict rules: to meet with 'smoking cigarettes' is frowned upon.

We have argued that there is no reason for us to retain features which are disruptive to the readers' experiences, as long as we know why we do so - and go about it with due caution (Report 1: 17).

V. SELECTION OF THE TALES FOR THE FUTURE WORK

V.I The Turkish Stories

Pot was considered a typical fairytale with a nondescript setting and a number of mostly "Danish"- and few alien-surface features. It was not considered particularly controversial, although some readers saw in it a reflection of the consumer society. The aspects elicited in terms of theme were simplistic and fairly few, e.g. it's not always bad to act on instinct.

The tale was fairly indifferent, and cannot be said to represent a truly foreign culture. In terms of probing the literary experience, we could not go beyond the jejeune and superficial with this story.

Keloglan evoked a more facetted response:
It was considered both funny and brutal.
It was more alien than Danish, mostly on the strength of the name and some surface features. The plot called for little comment, but the thematic suggestions showed considerable depth and scope, e.g. that it deals with sexual awakening; external indifference when in a tight spot etc.. On the other hand the story was really popular with the readers.

Apple was the story which the majority of the readers preferred. However, in themselves these figures may be misleading because of the preponderance of girls among the readers. The story drew comments to the effect that it was funny, good and realistic. It was considered decidedly alien, and the thematic suggestions covered a wider spectum than those of any of the other stories, e.g. the role of the sexes, the role of a woman, the relations to parents, etc..

For Folktale-project - where we want to check both cultural as well as pertinent modern norms - Apple fulfils the requirements particularly well, and has therefore been chosen for the future work.

V.2 The Danish Tales

The Danish tales, do not lead up to an equally obvious listing:

Prince was regarded or accepted as a fairytale, although it was untraditional, alien and exotic, with both typical fairytale elements (the figure three, the helper, etc.), and with some very strange actions (eating children etc.). The plot was good. The symbols were interpreted mostly in isolation. The themes were fairly facetted: good vs. evil, forgiveness, fertility (or infertility), the process of going from childhood to adulthood, and class differences with a conflict between the older and the younger generations. Nonetheless, it must weigh

against Prince that the vast majority of the readers (a total of 21) spontaneously considered it the least Danish and most exotic tale: it is not a "Danish fairytale" with a modern Danish audience. Accordingly Prince is the least suited for our purposes.

Per struck the readers as humorous, and very realistic with a typical Danish setting. The protagonist aroused sympathy with some. Its plot was good, and the themes covered questions of rule, justice, adultery, forgiveness, punishment, and morals.

Girl was a typical fairytale, and the plot was also referred to. The themes were facetted: good vs. evil; innocence and purity installed in their right place at the top; help which was rewarded; the transition from childhood to adulthood, and social climbing.

In terms of the fullness of the responses elicited, Per and Girl are thus almost on a par. Per covers plot and character better, but Girl brings out more themes.

When we keep in mind the cultural aspect of the present project, however, Per is by far the better choice: it clearly connects much better with a Danish - albeit old-time - culture; its protagonist is male - as a useful counterweight to Apple; and whereas Girl deals with coming of age and getting a husband, just like Apple - the theme of Per is radically different: it belongs to another stage in life.

Therefore Per has been chosen for the future work in the Folktaleproject.

V.3 The Greenlandic Tales

The choice of the Greenlandic tales was more problematic.

Nava was, at best considered "realistic" but - especially considering comments made on other stories - it also stood out as a cruel and violent tale, which was completely alien. What weighed heacily against it was the paucity of symbolic/thematic suggestions it elicited: e.g. a family feud, and completely alien norms. For although they are culturally bound, they are few and hardly make up for the disgust some readers have vented.

Snatcher was clearly less alien than the other tales. In the opinion of several readers it was fairly simple and coherent. But this is not countered by any in-depth thematic suggestions, which therefore also led to a rejection of this tale.

The Deserted seemed less alien than both Pleiad and Nava, and drew comments that it was good. On the other hand there are not many thematic suggestions implying that the story might be particularly well suited.

Pleiad appeared alien to most readers, and to contain what we might call "old sayings and proverbs" - in any event it generates more symbolic and thematic suggestions than any of the other tales.

V.3.1 Discussion

The problem was that all four tales almost equally unpopular with modern Danish readers.

It will be remembered that in the original planning (Report 2: 23-24) we had a tale in reserve in case the above stories did not come up to our expectations. But then Pleiad elicited more in-depth responses than the other tales. And, as the two other tales selected, namely Apple and Per, were fairly long, and since the duration of the study in the datacollecting phase should not exceed two hours, this meant that the selection of a short tale from Greenland was practical.

At a meeting (13 March 1985), we decided to use Pleiad (soon to renamed The Barking Ones) for the nonce, and take up the question again when we had some "pure" responses to the tale.

V.3.2 The Greenlandic Tales: Postscript

In order to make sure that we were not completely lost in case The Barking Ones/The Pleiad did not work, we started a search for a substitute tale, while the data-collecting was intiated after the Pleiads had been translated (as planned in Report 1: 18-20).

We found only one story which was readily accessible to us: the Legend of the Hunter from Aluk by the native Greenlandic narrator Aron. He had written it in 1868, and a copy of it was readily available in Meldgaard (1982: 76-80). On the one hand, Aron was a native Greenlander who had personally told and recorded this tale; on the other hand, he must also have been affected by Danish norms, as he had had a fair amount of contact with Danes. (It should be mentioned that other tales written by Greenlanders for Rink's volumes (rpt. 1972) were too long for our purposes).

In the meantime we used The Barking Ones in introspection and essay studies, and discussed the outcome on 14 March, 29 May, and 19 June. The problems could be specified as follows:

In the c. 20 essays we had received, and in the introspection studies in which Danes, Americans, and one British citizen had participated by 29 May, the story was often considered bad, incoherent, and confusing.

The main problem then was, that many people considered it much too alien - much more so than Apple which presented no problems in terms of being appreciated by Danes.

On the other hand, there were some good reasons for retaining The Barking Ones:

In the first place it was short and thus fitted into the

general scheme of the project (Report 1:11-16).

From a methodological angle we could argue that we only want to set up a set of methods for exploring the literary experience, and then the retention of the tale was fine.

Secondly, we were assured by Eskimologists that the tale was "authentic" and reflected communal norms and Eskimo culture. However, the society in which the tale had been told was an isolated hunting community whose customs and ways are rapildy disappearing, and it might therefore fall flat with modern Greenlandic readers:

We actually tried to have modern Greenlanders comment on the tale by means of essays (as of 15 March 85) but failed. The crux could be specified as follows:

(a) perhaps some tales are so specific to certain cultures that their cross-cultural contents are of such insignificance that they cannot be traced - or can be established only with great difficulty.

And (b) perhaps we were simply faced with the possibility of falling into the trap of ethnocentricity, i.e. The Barking Ones was an expression of a narrative tradition which was alien only to Western Europeans. The fact that Apple aroused no similar displeasure could be ascribed to a common narrative denominator perhaps not unaffected by the - by now centuries old - standing of Arabian Nights in Western literary tradition.

Thirdly, the story did, even with those who disliked it, generate reasonably many thematic suggestions, i.e. the contents could not be written off just like that.

Fourthly, a rejection of The Barking Ones did not affect readers' attitudes to the study and their responses to the other tales; the tale thus had no major disruptive effect. By 19 June, the first two Greenlandic readers had participated in the introspection study: both considered The Barking Ones better than the two other tales (Per Smed's Whip and The Golden Apple). This clinched the argument: The Barking Ones [The Pleiads in the present Report] became our Greenlandic tale.

The questions raised by our qualms about accepting the Greenlandic tale can - perhaps - later be answered by asking readers to respond to statements such as "I like a tale with clear causal connections" and "I like being able to create the connections and causalities in my own mind rather than having them spelled out" - at all events we are aware of the difference.

V.4 Concluding Remarks

The tales selected were thus the Turkish Story The Golden Apple; the Danish Per Smed's Whip; and the Greenlandic The Barking Ones.

The textual work will be described in the next report.

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APPENDIX A:

The Pre-reading instruction, read to the readers one to two weeks before the data-collecting, when they received the three or four stories in each group:

"I will now give you three/four folktales. Cay Dollerup/I ask(s) you to read these tales with care, and on [day specified], he/I shall be here and ask you some questions, which you will answer in writing in class.

He/I emphasise(s) that this is no test. You are not supposed to arrive at certain, "correct" solutions, but he is/ I am interested in your own views. And it is to get as full a coverage of them as possible that he/I ask(s) you to read the stories carefully.

The work is anonymous. And as the texts are to be used later on, he/I would like to have them back, too.

The last ten minutes in class will be used for telling you about the whole idea of the study, and you will also get some kind of brief feedback next autumn."

APPENDIX B:

The last Instruction and the questions handed out in connection with the actual data-collecting in class by CD or BK:

"In the first place: thank you for participating.

Below are five questions which I would like you to answer. I shall use the last five to ten minutes in class for telling you why we pose them. But I must ask you to use your time so that you answer all of them. I should be grateful if you write legibly, with a wide margin, and start on a new page every time you begin to answer a new question (please write the number in the left upper hand corner).

Don't worry abour making your writing terribly fine - legibility is the key-word.

And then I wish to stress that I am interested in your personal views, whatever they are.

If you have any questions, just go ahead and ask them - as I have told you this is no test.

The questions:

1. Which of the three/four tales is best?
   Why?

2. Which tale do you consider most Danish or alien?
   In what way?

3. Are these stories or elements in them symbolic?
   If so - in what way?

4. Does one or more of them have any "deeper meaning" (don't waste any time explaining how you define this concept).
   If so - which one(s)?

5. Have you talked with anybody else about the stories?
   If so, I would like to know if you have changed your mind on any points and what they were.

When you are finished, please put your stories and the answers together.

OVERVIEW OF FOLKTALE AS OF JUNE 1985

QUESTIONNAIRE ON BACKGROUND VARIABLES (stage 7):

Danish side:

First version tested with c. 50 readers: 85/I.
Revised and typed out for 2. testing: 85/I.

English side:

First version tested in US with c. 40 readers: 85/I.
Revised and retyped for testing: 85/I.

DANISH TEXTS:

Danish side:

Best text selected: 80/I (stage 2: present report)
Text modernised: 83/I. Text collated with English Text: 85/I.

English side:

Test translated: 85/I. Collated with Danish text: 85/I.

TURKISH STORIES:

Danish side:

Best text selected: 85/I (stage 2: present report)
Text collated with English text and changed: 85/I.

English side:

Text translated: 85/I
Collated with Danish text: 85/I.

GREENLANDIC STORIES:

Danish side:

Best text selected: 85/I (stage 2: present report)
Text collated with English text and changed: 85/I.

English side:

Text translated 85/I. Collated with Danish text 85/I.

Introspection studies:

4 Danes, 1 Englishman, 6 Americans, 2 Greenlanders (stage 4).

Essaystudies:

c. 40 Danes (stage 4).

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